

Natural Resources Committee:

Re: Opposition to the HB 5834/SB 1350 Including gray wolves in the list of game animals in Michigan. PLEASE VOTE NO ON SB 5834

I have heard that there will be a discussion on Thursday, Nov. 8, in the Michigan Senate Natural Resources, Environment and Great Lakes Committee regarding testimony on the establishment of a game season for wolves in Michigan and a move to push this through both houses quickly. I would like to register my complete and utter objection of any attempt to establish such a season. There is no justifiable reason to hunt wolves in Michigan.

To hunt wolves after a hard struggle to bring back wolves that had been hunted out of the state before is illogical, inhumane and ironically wasteful. Wolves are part of our environmental landscape and keep balance naturally with any number of other species, including coyotes. It is not for man to once again eliminate this noble creature from our forests. The wolf has much to teach man about living and working together in a community.

We already have a comprehensive wolf management plan to handle wolves that kill livestock or pets. Michigan wolves number approximately 680 and occupy only 5 percent of their historic range which is too low a number to start eradicating them. They have hardly recovered. The DNR needs to maintain its goal of ensuring the long-term survival of wolves in Michigan. Hunting them would only undermine that goal.

We should not consider or condone the killing of wolves in our state. Instead we should capitalize on wolves being part of our state's ecology and demonstrate that we can live in harmony with the wolf. We can take a page from Predators Alliance out west or western parks that have successful programs educating people about the wolf's place in nature. And they have, in fact, featured wolves as star attractions in the tourist industry. We could also add wolf sitings as another unique feature to our Pure Michigan campaign. That would set us apart from the baser instincts of simply "establishing a game season for wolves."

And keep in mind that MSU took a statewide poll in 2010 and the vast majority of Michigan residents do NOT support wolf hunting.

Please let the committee know that they should think about the wolves in a creative manner now that they have been brought back. Not in a destructive manner. This is the time to welcome and incorporate the wolf as part of our environmental fabric and tourist industry.

Thank you very much –

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